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ABSTRACT

The goal of the Counseling and Career Guidance Component of the Detroit (Michigan) school desegregation plan was to improve student effectiveness in the areas of personal, social, academic, and career development. Major program functions included individual and group counseling, program selection and placement guidance, career guidance, and referral and information services. The Counseling and Career Guidance Component was evaluated using the responses of students, staff, and parents to survey questions. About 50 percent of the students reported receiving counseling and guidance services. Of these students, 80 percent reported that the services were helpful. Staff survey results indicated that 90 percent of elementary, middle, and high school teachers conferred with a counselor concerning a student at least once during the year. Two thirds of the teachers felt that the conferences were effective. Parent survey results showed that 64 percent of elementary parents and 85 percent of middle and high school parents talked with a school counselor during the year. (Author/MK)

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PRODUCT EVALUATION OF THE COUNSELING AND CAREER GUIDANCE COMPONENT OF THE DETROIT DESEGREGATION COURT ORDER

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March 1981

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PRODUCT EVALUATION OF THE COUNSELING AND CAREER GUIDANCE COMPONENT OF THE DETROIT DESEGREGATION COURT ORDER

Abstract

The Counseling and Career Guidance Component of the 1975 Detroit school desegregation court order has as its primary goal the improvement of student effectiveness in the areas of personal, social, academic and career development. Major program functions include individual and group counseling, program selection and placement guidance, career guidance, and referral and information service. The component is a city-wide program operating at all school levels.

The first phase of a product (outcome) evaluation of the Counseling and Career Guidance Component was designed to determine the extent to which certain basic counseling and guidance services have been delivered to students, staff and parents, and to evaluate the effectiveness of these services. The evaluation was based on responses of students, staff and parents to survey questions concerning their personal experiences with the services during the 1979-80 school year.

Student survey questions inquired about four major kinds of direct counselor service to middle and high school students: (1) informing students of kinds of help available to them; (2) assisting students with selections of courses and programs; (3) career guidance; and (4) counseling concerning students' problems. Each of these types of service was reported to have been received by about 50 percent or more of the students surveyed. All four kinds of service were rated helpful by more than 80 percent of the students receiving them.

Staff survey results indicated that 90 percent or more of elementary, middle and high school teachers conferred with a counselor concerning a student's problem at least once during the year, and that of those who had conferred, over two-thirds felt the conferences effectively helped them work with students.

Parent survey results indicated that 64 percent of elementary school parents had talked with a school counselor one or more times during the school year, and that about 85 percent of middle and high school parents had done so.

Research and Evaluation Department
Detroit Public Schools

March 1981

PRODUCT EVALUATION OF THE COUNSELING AND CAREER GUIDANCE COMPONENT OF THE DETROIT DESEGREGATION COURT ORDER

Introduction

The Counseling and Career Guidance Component of the Detroit school desegregation court order is one of several supplementary educational programs ordered by the court to remedy the effects of past segregation in the Detroit public schools. The component is a city-wide program operating at all school levels. Major program functions include counseling (individual and group), career guidance, program selection and placement guidance, and referral and information service. The overall purpose is "to increase the direct delivery of guidance services to students to improve student effectiveness in personal, social, academic, and career development areas."

In each senior high school the component provides for the full implementation of the Modified Counseling Program in which a guidance administrator assists the building principal by planning, coordinating and monitoring guidance and counseling functions and services. Additional clerical services have been provided to give assistance to counselors.

Twenty-three of the district's 63 middle schools have been provided with additional staffing comparable to that in each of the comprehensive senior high schools, a guidance administrator and added clerical services. Every middle school's counseling and guidance program has been enhanced by the addition of a guidance aide who is a specially trained paraprofessional from the local school community.

Counselors have been added to the staff in the elementary schools at a ratio of one counselor per school. They function under the direction of the principal, with supportive help from region and central staff.

Component staffing was completed in August, 1979, with the placement of a guidance specialist in each region office. The eight regional guidance administrators coordinate, supervise and monitor the K-12 guidance and counseling programs in the regions as directed by their respective region superintendents.

At the central level, the director of the Department of Guidance and Counseling carries responsibility for leadership in the planning, coordinating, and supervising of the overall city-wide counseling and guidance program. Three guidance specialists serve as program coordinators, each carrying major responsibility for one school level, elementary, middle, or senior high. These specialists, in cooperation with the assistant director, assist the director of the department in the planning, implementation, and supervision of programs. Administrators of specially funded guidance projects operating in Detroit schools work in close cooperation with those responsible for the regular city-wide counseling and guidance program.

The Department of Research and Evaluation began evaluating court-ordered desegregation of the Detroit Public Schools in 1977. From 1977 through 1979 the evaluation was primarily a study of the impact of the overall desegregation effort on attitudes of students, staff, and parents, and on student achievements. In the fall of 1979 the emphasis shifted to product (outcome) evaluations of the individual court-ordered educational components. This is a first report on the product evaluation of the Counseling and Guidance Component.

Component Objectives

The following objectives have been established for the product (outcome) evaluation of the Counseling and Career Guidance Component:

1. Students will be informed about the kinds of help available to them in their schools.
2. Students will obtain effective counselor assistance in the selection of regular courses, alternative programs, and special activities appropriate to their needs and interests.
3. Students will receive helpful guidance concerning careers.
4. Students will obtain helpful assistance in dealing with problems which impede their educational development.
5. Teachers will participate effectively in the school's counseling and guidance program.
6. Parents will obtain information about the counseling services available at their child's school.

Sources of Evidence

Student, staff, and parent surveys are the major sources of evidence of objective attainment presented in this report. The Research and Evaluation Department has conducted four annual surveys of student, staff, and parent opinions and behaviors concerning court-ordered desegregation in Detroit schools. These surveys were conducted in May and June in 1977, 1978, 1979, and 1980. Survey questionnaires were administered to city-wide samples of middle and high school students, local school staff at eldmentary, middle, and high schools, and to parents of students at all school levels.

The first three surveys (1977, 1978, and 1979) were designed primarily for a general evaluation of the total desegregation effort. The 1980 surveys included many of the questions asked in the earlier surveys, and additional

questions expressly designed to facilitate product evaluations of several of the court-ordered educational components, including the Counseling and Career Guidance Component. Most of the findings presented in this report are based on responses of students, staff, and parents to 1980 survey questions.

Basic information about the size and racial composition of the 1980 student survey sample is presented in Table 1. Staff survey sample information is given in Table 2, and parent survey sample information in Table 3.

The 1980 survey sample consisted of 77 schools selected to provide a good representation of all Detroit schools.

For the student survey, the selection of the student sample involved a random selection of intact classes at each participating school. In each middle school a random sample of from two to four Grade 7 classes was selected. In each high school the sample included three to six Grade 10 classes. The survey questionnaires were administered to all students in each sample class by the regular teacher.

TABLE 1

1980 Student Survey Samples

School Level	Number of Schools Represented	Number of Student Respondents by Race		
		Black	White	Total
Middle Schools	23	853	250	1103
High Schools	13	745	170	915

Staff survey sample members were randomly selected from participating school lists of all full time certificated educational personnel. This process provided appropriate representation of teachers of all grade levels and subjects, department heads, counselors, and administrators. In the

elementary and middle schools a 50 percent sample was selected. In the high schools one of every three staff members was selected. Completed staff questionnaires were returned by about 60 percent of all sample members.

TABLE 2

1980 Staff Survey Samples

School Level	Number of Schools Represented	Number of Staff Respondents by Race		
		Black	White	Total
Elementary Schools	41	211	176	387
Middle Schools	23	133	144	277
High Schools	13	130	185	315

The 1980 parent survey questionnaires were administered to parents of elementary, middle, and high school pupils. The parent sample members were identified by a random selection process involving selection from student membership rosters for each sample school. At the elementary school level, samples were made up of parents of 20 percent of all Grade 2 and Grade 5 pupils. The middle school parent sample included parents of 20 percent of all Grade 7 pupils. For the high school parent survey, parents of one of every 16 Grade 10 students and one of every eight Grade 12 students were selected. The rate of return of completed parent questionnaires averaged about 25 percent.

TABLE 3

1980 Parent Survey Samples

School Level	Number of Schools Represented	Number of Parent Respondents by Race		
		Black	White	Total
Elementary Schools	41	228	129	357
Middle Schools	23	156	74	230
High Schools	13	105	41	146

Evaluation Findings Concerning Direct Counselor Services to Students

The first four component evaluation objectives all concerned direct counselor services to students. Evidence concerning these objectives was obtained from student responses to a series of questions in the aforementioned 1980 survey of middle and high school student attitudes and behaviors. The directions for responding to the questions read as follows:

> Listed below are several kinds of things (activities) a school counselor may have done during this school year. Read each activity and answer two questions about it:
>
> First, how often did it happen during this school year?
>
> Second, how helpful was the activity to you? (If you answered "Never" to the first question, skip the second one.)

Each of the first four objectives is restated below, followed by student response distributions[1] for the counselor activities assessed, and comments on the findings.

[1] The distributions of student responses, and of staff and parent responses later in the report, are given in terms of percentages. In some cases, reported percents do not add up exactly to 100 because fractions of percents were rounded off to the nearest whole number.

Objective 1.	Students will be informed by counselors about kinds of help available to them in their schools.

Frequency and Value of Counselor Presentations of Information Regarding Help Available to Students

Counselor Activity	School Level	Percents of Student Responses					
		How Often?			How Helpful?*		
		Never	Once or Twice	Three or More Times	Not Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Very Helpful
Counselor met with you and other students in a group to tell you about kinds of help available to students at your school.	Middle	51%	34%	15%	15%	47%	38%
	High	52	36	12	7	49	43

*The percents of "How Helpful" responses are based on responses of only those students who responded "once or twice" or "three or more times" to the "How Often" question.

Middle School Students. About half of the student respondents (49 percent) indicated that counselors had given them information about available help in a group meeting at least once during the school year. Of these students, 85 percent rated this service helpful.

High School Students. Slightly less than half of the student respondents (48 percent) indicated that counselors had given them information about available help in a group meeting at least once during the school year. Of these students, 92 percent found this service helpful.

Objective 2.	Students will receive effective counselor assistance in the selection of regular courses, alternative programs, and special activities appropriate to their needs and interests.

Frequency and Value of Counselor Assistance in the Selection of School Courses, Programs and Activities

Counselor Activity	School Level	Percents of Student Responses					
		How Often?			How Helpful?*		
		Never	Once or Twice	Three or More Times	Not Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Very Helpful
Counselor met with you alone to discuss your choice of courses, or special school programs or activities you might be interested in.	Middle	60%	25%	15%	13%	45%	42%
	High	15	60	24	12	52	37
Counselor met with you and other students in a group to discuss available courses, special school programs or activities.	Middle	46	34	21	16	51	33
	High	35	50	15	14	55	31

*The percents of "How Helpful" responses are based on responses of only those students who responded "once or twice" or "three or more times" to the "How Often" question.

Middle School Students. Forty percent said they had met with the counselor at least once in a one-to-one situation regarding choice of courses, special programs or activities. Of these, 87 percent found these conferences helpful. Fifty-five percent reported having participated in one or more group meetings with counselors regarding choices of courses, programs, etc., and of these, 84 percent found such meetings to be helpful to some degree.

High School Students. Eighty-four percent reported that they had met with a counselor in a one-to-one setting regarding choice of courses, etc.,

one or more times, and 89 percent of these students reported that these conferences were helpful. Sixty-five percent reported participating in one or more group meetings with counselors concerning school program choices and of these, 86 percent rated these meetings helpful.

Objective 3. Students will receive helpful career guidance from their counselor.

Frequency and Value of Counselor Assistance in the Area of Career Guidance

Counselor Activity	School Level	Percents of Student Responses					
		How Often?			How Helpful?*		
		Never	Once or Twice	Three or More Times	Not Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Very Helpful
Counselor met with you and other students in a group to discuss careers or career choices.	Middle	46%	29%	25%	12%	43%	45%
	High	32	48	20	11	44	45

*The percents of "How Helpful" responses are based on responses of only those students who responded "once or twice" or "three or more times" to the "How Often" question.

Middle School Students. Over half of the students surveyed (54 percent) reported that they had met at least once in a group situation with their counselor to receive career guidance. Of these, 88 percent found those meetings to be helpful.

High School Students. Two of every three students (68 percent) indicated they had met in a group setting with the counselor to receive career guidance and of these, 89 percent reported that these meetings were helpful.

Objective 4.	Students will obtain helpful counselor assistance in dealing with problems which impede their educational development.

Frequency and Value of Counselor Assistance With Problems

Counselor Activity	School Level	Percents of Student Responses					
		How Often?			How Helpful?*		
		Never	Once or Twice	Three or More Times	Not Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Very Helpful
Counselor met with you alone to discuss some problem you were having in school.	Middle	40%	38%	22%	12%	43%	45%
	High	52	36	12	12	37	50
Counselor met with you in a group to discuss some problem you or another member of the group were having.	Middle	46	35	19	19	43	38
	High	80	14	6	15	54	31

*The percents of "How Helpful" responses are based on responses of only those students who responded "once or twice" or "three or more times" to the "How Often" question.

Middle School Students. Sixty percent reported meeting a counselor at least once in a one-to-one setting to discuss school problems. Of these, 88 percent considered these sessions helpful. Over half (54 percent) reported meeting a counselor in a group to discuss students' problems one or more times and of these, 81 percent found the meetings to be helpful.

High School Students. Slightly less than half (48 percent) reported meeting the counselor in a one-to-one setting regarding a school problem. Of these, 87 percent found such conferences to be helpful. Twenty percent reported meeting with a counselor in a group to discuss school problems. Of these, 85 percent indicated that these meetings were helpful.

Evaluation Findings Concerning Teacher Involvement in the Counseling and Guidance Program

The fifth component evaluation objective was as follows:

> Objective 5. Teachers will participate effectively in the school's counseling and guidance program.

Three 1980 staff survey questions have provided evidence regarding this objective. Each is presented below along with distributions of the responses of teacher members of the staff survey sample and comments on the results.

During This School Year, How Often Have You and a School Counselor Conferred About a Student's Problems, Needs, or Progress?
(1980 Staff Survey Question 41)

School Level	Percents of Teacher Responses			
	Not At All	Once or Twice	Three or Four Times	More Than Four Times
Elementary	10%	24%	23%	43%
Middle	2	17	19	62
High	8	22	21	49

Elementary School Teachers. Nine out of ten reported communicating with a counselor regarding a student's problems, needs or progress at least once during the school year, and 66 percent said they had done so three or more times.

Middle School Teachers. Ninety-eight percent reported conferring with a counselor regarding student problems, needs or progress at least once, and 81 percent reported three or more conferences during the year.

High School Teachers. Ninety-two percent reported communicating with a counselor regarding student problems, needs or progress at least once, and 70 percent reported three or more conferences.

If You Have Conferred With a Counselor, How Effective Has This Been in Helping You Work with Students? (1980 Staff Survey Question 42)

School Level	Percents of Teacher Responses			
	Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Effective	Very Effective
Elementary	11%	20%	49%	20%
Middle	6	21	52	21
High	9	23	54	13

Elementary School Teachers. Nearly seven out of ten (69 percent) perceived their conferences with a counselor as effective.

Middle School Teachers. Seventy-three percent perceived their conferences with a counselor as effective.

High School Teachers. Sixty-seven percent considered their counselor conferences as having been effective.

In General, How Well Informed Are You About Your School's Counseling and Career Guidance Program? (1980 Staff Survey Question 40)

School Level	Percents of Teacher Responses		
	Poorly Informed	Moderately Informed	Well Informed
Elementary	13%	35%	52%
Middle	12	45	43
High	17	53	30

Elementary School Teachers. About half of the respondents (52 percent) felt that they were well informed as to the school's counseling and guidance program.

Middle School Teachers. Forty-three percent considered themselves well informed about the school's counseling and guidance program.

High School Teachers. Thirty percent rated themselves well informed regarding the school's counseling and guidance program.

Evaluation Findings Concerning Counselor-Parent Contacts

The sixth component evaluation objective was:

> Objective 6. Parents will obtain information about the counseling services available at their child's school.

Two 1980 parent survey questions have provided evidence relevant to the objective. Each of these is presented below followed by distributions of responses and comments on the findings.

Since September 1979, How Often Have You Talked With Your Child's School Counselor, Either by Phone or Face-To-Face?
(1980 Parent Survey Question 36)

School Level	Percents of Parent Responses		
	Not At All	Once or Twice	Three or More Times
Elementary	36%	31%	34%
Middle	15	43	42
High	17	37	46

Elementary School Parents. Sixty-five percent reported having had direct communication with their child's counselor at least once during the year.

Middle School Parents. Over five of every six (85 percent) reported having spoken directly with a school counselor one or more times during the school year.

High School Parents. Eighty-three percent said they had had communication with a counselor at least once during the school year.

Since September 1979, Have You Received Any Information From Your Child's School About the Kinds of Help Available From a School Counselor? (1980 Parent Survey Question 37)

School Level	Percents of Parent Responses		
	Yes	No	Not Sure
Elementary	36%	52%	12%
Middle	31	54	15
High	33	54	13

At all school levels about one-third of the parents responded that they had received information about kinds of help available from counselors.

Findings Concerning Staff Evaluations of Their Schools' Counseling and Career Guidance Programs

One of the staff survey questions included in the 1978, 1979, and 1980 surveys asked staff members how they felt about their school's counseling and guidance program. This question and the findings follow.

How do You Feel About the Adequacy of the Counseling and Guidance Services to Students at Your School?
(Staff Survey Question 14)

School Level	Year of Survey	Percents of Staff Responses			
		Very Dissatisfied	Quite Dissatisfied	Quite Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Elementary	1978	21%	28%	37%	14%
	1979	14	18	47	21
	1980	11	20	45	24
Middle	1978	11	38	41	10
	1979	12	32	43	14
	1980	10	26	48	17
High	1978	20	39	35	16
	1979	17	34	42	7
	1980	10	34	45	11

Elementary School Staff. There was an increase of 18 percent in staff who indicated satisfaction with the adequacy of counseling and guidance service to students over the years from 1978 through 1980 (counselors were being added to elementary school staffs during this time). In 1980, 69 percent of staff expressed satisfaction.

Middle School Staff. From 1978 to 1980, staff who indicated satisfaction with their schools' counseling and guidance programs increased by 14 percent. In 1980, 65 percent expressed satisfaction.

High School Staff. Between 1978 and 1980 there was a 5 percent increase in staff who indicated satisfaction with their schools' counseling and guidance programs. In 1980, 56 percent indicated that they were satisfied.

Summary and Discussion

Summary of Findings

The findings of the product evaluation of the Counseling and Career Guidance Component of the Detroit desegregation court order are summarized below.

Direct Counselor Service to Students

The first component product evaluation objective stated that "students will be informed by counselors about kinds of help available to them in their schools." In a May, 1980, student survey, about 50 percent of the middle and high school student respondents indicated that they had received such information one or more times during the school year in group meetings with a counselor. Of those who said they had participated in such meetings, a substantial percentage (85 percent of the middle school students and 93 percent of the high school students) rated these meetings as helpful. While it is true that 50 percent of the students had not received information about available help in group meetings with a counselor, it is possible that these students received information about help available to students in their schools through other procedures. In many middle and high schools, students are informed about available help by teachers, by public address system announcements, and/or information bulletins distributed to students.

The second component evaluation objective was that "students will receive effective counselor assistance in the selection of regular courses, alternative programs and special activities appropriate to their needs and interests." Findings of the 1980 student survey indicated that this kind of assistance was received during the school year in individual student/counselor conferences by 40 percent of middle school students and 84 percent of

high school students, and that of these students, almost 90 percent (at both school levels) rated their conferences helpful. The large difference between the percentages of middle and high school students reporting participation in individual conferences with a counselor is probably due to the greatly expanded variety of course offerings available at the high school level and the obvious necessity for individualization of guidance.

The 1980 student survey results also included the finding that assistance in the selection of courses, programs and activities was received in group meetings with a counselor during the school year by 55 percent of middle school students and 65 percent of high school students. Of those students who had participated in such meetings, about 85 percent (at both school levels) rated these meetings helpful.

The third objective stated that "students will receive helpful career guidance from their counselor." One of the findings of the 1980 student survey was that career guidance was received in group meetings with a counselor at least once during the school year by 54 percent of middle school students and by 68 percent of high school students, and that of these students almost 90 percent (at both middle and high school levels) rated these meetings helpful.

The fourth objective was that "students will obtain helpful counselor assistance in dealing with problems which impede their educational development." Findings of the 1980 student survey indicated that such assistance was received in individual conferences with a counselor one or more times during the school year by 60 percent of the middle school students and 48 percent of those in high schools. Of these students, over 85 percent (at both school levels) rated their conferences as helpful.

Student survey results revealed, also, that assistance with students' problems in group meetings with a counselor was received one or more times during the school year by 54 percent of the middle school students and by 20 percent of the high school students, and that of those reporting participation, more than 80 percent (in both middle and high schools) rated the group meetings as helpful.

Teacher Participation in the Counseling and Guidance Program

The fifth objective stated that "teachers will participate effectively in the school's counseling and guidance program." Evidence concerning this objective was obtained from teacher responses to three questions in 1980 surveys administered to samples of elementary, middle and high school staff members.

Ninety percent or more of teachers at every school level reported conferring with a counselor regarding a student's problem at least once during the school year and, depending upon the school level, 66 to 81 percent reported three or more such conferences. Of those who had conferred, over two-thirds, at every school level, reported that conferences with the school counselor had been effective in helping them work with students.

One staff survey question asked, "In general, how well informed are you about your school's counseling and guidance program?" "Well informed" was the response of 52 percent of the elementary teachers, 43 percent of the middle school teachers, and 30 percent of those in high schools. Most of the remaining teachers responded "moderately informed."

Counselor Communication With Parents

The sixth objective stated that "parents will obtain information about the counseling services available at their child's school." Two 1980 parent

survey questions provided evidence in regard to this objective.

The first asked about the frequency of parents' contacts with a school counselor. Sixty-five percent of the elementary school parents reported having talked to a counselor face-to-face or by phone one or more times during the school year, and about 85 percent of both middle and high school parents responded similarly.

The second survey question asked about communication as to the kinds of help available from a school counselor. At every school level about one-third of the parent sample reported that during the school year they had received information from a counselor about the kinds of help available.

Staff Evaluation of the School Counseling and Guidance Program

Each of the 1978, 1979, and 1980 staff surveys asked staff members how they felt about the guidance and counseling program in their schools. Between 1978 and 1980 the percents of staff members indicating their satisfaction with the program increased substantially in elementary schools (up 18 percent) and middle schools (up 14 percent). In the high schools, "satisfied" responses increased slightly (up 5 percent). In the 1980 survey majorities of staff members at all three levels indicated satisfaction.

Discussion

The primary purpose of this product evaluation of the Counseling and Career Guidance Component was to obtain valid measures of the extent to which certain basic counseling and guidance services have been delivered to Detroit public school students, teachers and parents, and of the effectiveness of these services. The findings are based on responses of students, staff, and

parents to survey questions regarding their personal experiences with the counseling and guidance services evaluated.

In December 1980, the director of Detroit's counseling and career guidance program was given all of the evaluation data presented in this report and, in addition, breakdowns of the data by school for every school that participated in the surveys. This information has been helpful to counseling and guidance program administrators and supervisors in several ways. It has helped them determine the amount of emphasis placed on each of the major counselor services provided in schools. It has helped them identify program strengths and weaknesses, and it has provided guidance for planning inservice education for counselors.

In May 1981, the city-wide student, staff, and parent surveys will be repeated. The surveys will again include the questions which served as the sources of evaluation data for this report. Results will permit comparisons of 1981 findings with 1980 findings in order to evaluate progress in the improvement of counseling and guidance services in Detroit schools.